



Brock University  
Niagara Region  
1812 Sir Isaac Brock Way  
St. Catharines, ON  
L2S 3A1 Canada  
T 905-688-5550  
brocku.ca

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **28th annual Cuvée Grand Tasting set to showcase Ontario VQA wine**

With one week to go, organizers are ready to roll out the red carpet for the 28th annual **Cuvée Grand Tasting** Friday, March 4 at the Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls.

Organized by Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI), Cuvée is one of the largest celebrations of VQA wine. The event will pair wine from 48 VQA wineries with culinary offerings from 12 celebrated chefs who will present signature dishes at live cooking stations. The night ends with the *Après Cuvée* after party which features a live band, icewine, sparkling wine, cider and local craft beer.

Proceeds from the event go to the Cuvée Legacy Fund established after the 2015 event. The fund has already awarded \$15,000 in academic scholarships and contributed \$13,000 towards industry-driven research projects. In recognition of their past stewardship of the event, \$5,000 also went to support the Niagara Community Foundation.

"Not only does Cuvée showcase the finest VQA wines to consumers, it helps the industry continue to grow by funding valuable research and scholarships," says CCOVI director Debbie Inglis.

#### **Cuvée en Route**

The event doesn't end with the Grand Tasting, the Cuvée en Route passport program runs March 4-6 and provides consumers access to exclusive tasting flights and unique dining opportunities. Each of the 35 participating wineries has put careful consideration into showcasing wines that wouldn't normally be available to the public for tasting.

“The passport program extends the Cuvée experience,” says Cuvée manager Barb Tatarnic, “consumers have the opportunity to visit their favourite wineries from the Grand Tasting and create a memorable weekend in wine country.”

This year’s Cuvée en Route lineup includes limited edition wines, unique Ontario varietals, horizontal tastings where participants can taste multiple varietals from the same vintage and vertical flights where the same wine from a variety of vintages is showcased. Passports are included with the Grand Tasting ticket or can be purchased individually for \$30.

For more information, visit: [cuvee.ca](http://cuvee.ca)

#### **About CCOVI**

Located at Brock University, an hour from the Toronto area, CCOVI is an internationally recognized research institute that advances the interests of the grape and wine industry by investing time and resources on its research priorities. Established in 1996, CCOVI works in partnership with the Grape Growers of Ontario, the Wine Council of Ontario and the Winery and Grower Alliance of Ontario. Its network extends to external academic communities, federal and provincial research organizations, regional grape and wine industry groups across Canada and cool climate wine regions around the world.

**NOTE TO MEDIA: Attached photography from the 2015 Cuvée Grand Tasting is free for use. Any media interested in attending this year’s event must contact Kaitlyn Little at [klittle@brocku.ca](mailto:klittle@brocku.ca)**

For more information or for assistance arranging interviews:

**\* Kaitlyn Little, Marketing and Communications Officer, Brock University, [klittle@brocku.ca](mailto:klittle@brocku.ca), 905-688-5550 x4471 or 289-241-9154**